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May 18, 1987

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Ms. Alice Bertschi
Director
Young American News Network
4567 North Seymour Road
Flushing, Michigan 48433

Dear Ms. Bertschi:

I have been asked to respond to your letter of April 1 to President Reagan concerning the tragic fate of Raoul Wallenberg. The President, the Department of State, and Congress share a strong concern about the fate of Mr. Wallenberg. The U.S. Government takes every opportunity to make this concern known to the Soviet authorities.

Reflecting U.S. interest in this case, President Reagan signed into law in October 1983 a bill conferring honorary U.S. citizenship upon Raoul Wallenberg. Honoring Mr. Wallenberg in this fashion was an important symbolic act. It made the Soviets and the rest of the world aware of our great admiration for his courage and dedication to humanity. In addition it stressed our abhorrence for his unjust and illegal punishment by the Soviet Government.

To emphasize our dedication to resolve the mystery of Mr. Wallenberg's fate, we raised his case with the Soviets through diplomatic channels after he was made an honorary U.S. citizen. To date the Soviets have not responded. However, our efforts to resolve the tragic mystery of Mr. Wallenberg's fate will continue until the Soviets provide a full and satisfactory clarification of their actions in his case.

We have pressed our efforts both in bilateral meetings and international forums. In 1982, the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Commission urged the Soviet Union to make a "humanitarian gesture which would contribute to universal good-feeling, namely a renewed search and full report, which may lay questions to rest; or else in the best of all possible outcomes, result in the discovery of the whereabouts of a man who stands among the heroes of our time." At a February 1983 session of the Commission, the U.S. Alternate Representative again raised the issue of Raoul Wallenberg, whom he termed "one of the genuine heroes of World War II, and one of [redacted] most noble spirits." He suggested the U.N. Human Rights Commission's Working Group on Disappearances be authorized to make a renewed search and a full report on the case. Most recently, at the Vienna CSCE Review Meeting in December 1986, the head of the U.S. delegation, Ambassador Warren Zimmermann, repeated our concerns about Wallenberg's welfare and whereabouts.

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We continue to work closely with the Swedish Government to investigate reports alleging that Mr. Wallenberg ~~is still~~ will be alive. Thus far, we have been unable to substantiate this information. Nevertheless, we will maintain a cooperative effort with the Swedish Government and other interested parties to seek information that will clarify the fate of this brave man.

On January 17, 1985, President Reagan issued a statement to mark the fortieth anniversary of Raoul Wallenberg's disappearance and to commemorate "his heroic deeds in saving thousands of Hungarian Jews." In his statement, the President said, "We will continue to insist that the Soviet Union has a moral obligation to answer, once and for all, the questions we have about his fate."

If we can be of assistance to you in this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Parris
Director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs

Drafted:EUR/SOV/SOBI:BBryant
05/13/87 Ext. 78720 8711185
Cleared:EUR/SOV/SOBI:DGrossman
EUR/SOV/SOBI:TRobertson
EUR/SOV:JMEvans
EUR:TWSimons, JR
0674X

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